

Blake and the Ancients



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BLAKE AND THE ANCIENTS

Catalogue by H.B. de Groot

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The cover reproduces George Romney
A Brooding Man (catalogue no. 1),
possession of the Art Gallery of Ontario
(gift of Mr and Mrs Schuyler C. Snively).

BLAKE AND THE ANCIENTS

As a poet Blake was a very isolated figure. As an artist--that is to say, as a painter and engraver--he was hardly isolated. After all, he went through a quite conventional and rigorous training, first as an apprentice to the engraver Basire, then as a student at the Royal Academy. Moreover, at least two of the most important contemporary English artists, Flaxman and Fuseli, were men whom Blake knew well. Flaxman and Blake were especially close in the late 1780s when Blake for a brief time shared the interest in the Swedenborgian religion which was central in Flaxman's life. Fuseli and Blake shared a strong political radicalism, although Fuseli does not appear to have been very sympathetic towards the visionary side of Blake's art. In later years, however, Flaxman was one of the many people denounced in Blake's scathing epigrams in which only Fuseli came out well:

The only Man that eer I knew
Who did not make me almost spew
Was Fuseli he was both Turk & Jew
And so dear Christian Friends how do you do¹

George Romney was a very successful portrait painter with ambitions to paint historical works. A generation older, he was never close to Blake, yet we have it on Flaxman's authority that he was a great admirer of Blake's early historical drawings, ranking them with the work of Michelangelo.² Romney, in his turn, may have been a strong influence on Blake, not so much through his finished paintings as through his dark and tormented drawings, through what the rich patron and popular poet William Hayley called "those excesses of impetuous and undisciplined imagination".³ We show two such drawings, both from the permanent collection of the Art Gallery of Ontario,

A Brooding Man (no. 1) and John Howard Visiting a Lazaretto (no. 2). The latter is one of a series of works showing Romney's interest in the work of the prison reformer (the Blake exhibition now at the Art Gallery of Ontario includes a related drawing⁴). In Jean Hagstrum's words: "Howard's reports on conditions in English and continental jails led Romney to portray in many versions mysterious suffering people lurking in dark and gloomy dungeons--privately preserved records of a sensibilité touched by terror, sublimity and humanity."⁵

Yet in spite of Blake's connections with these prominent painters and in spite also of his faithful patron Thomas Butts, Blake's position as an artist was hardly secure during his life-time. This fact is particularly well illustrated by two events, Blake's involvement with William Hayley and the commission to execute the designs for Robert Blair's The Grave. For three years, from September 1800 to September 1803, Blake and his wife occupied a cottage in Felpham in Sussex, where Blake was employed by Hayley as an illustrator, amanuensis and general dogsbody. At first Blake was ecstatic about his work, about Hayley and about the countryside. On 21 September 1800 he called Flaxman, to whom he owed the introduction to Hayley, "a sublime Archangel My Friend & Companion from Eternity".⁶ Yet only a month earlier Flaxman had written to Hayley in terms which would have wounded Blake deeply, had he known the letter:

I hope that Blake's residence at Felpham will be a Mutual Comfort to you & him, & I see no reason why he should not make as good a livelihood there as in London, if he engraves & teaches drawing, by which he may gain considerably as also by making neat drawings of different kinds but if he places any dependence on painting large pictures, for which he is not qualified, either by habit or study, he will be miserably deceived [sic].⁷

By the beginning of 1802 Blake had begun to complain and on 6 July 1803 he began to assert his independence, stating: ". . . Mr. H. approves of My Designs as little as he does of my Poems, and I have been forced to insist on

his leaving me in both to my Own Self Will; for I am determin'd to be no longer Pester'd with his Genteel Ignorance & Polite Disapprobation."⁸ In August he became involved in a scuffle with a soldier named Scholfield and found himself in court on a charge of sedition. Although he was eventually acquitted, he developed an acute sense of persecution mania. Scholfield (or Scofield) attains mythical proportions as the Accuser in the poem Jerusalem, while Hayley is again and again denounced in the epigrams in which even Flaxman does not get off scot-free:

On H---ys Friendship

When H---y finds out what you cannot do
That is the very thing hell set you to
If you break not your Neck tis not his fault
But pecks of poison are not pecks of salt
And when he could not act upon my wife
Hired a Villain to bereave my Life⁹

To F---

I mock thee not tho I by thee am Mocked
Thou callst me Madman but I call thee Blockhead¹⁰

In October 1805 Robert Hartley Cromek, engraver and entrepreneur, employed Blake to design forty illustrations to Robert Blair's poem The Grave, twenty of which were to be engraved by the designer. Yet in the end only twelve of Blake's designs were engraved and not by Blake himself but by Louis Schiavonetti (no. 12), presumably because Cromek developed doubts about Blake's competence. Blake lost a valuable commission, for at this time it was the engraver and not the designer who gained the greater prestige and stood to make the greater sum of money. More importantly, he became so disillusioned with commercial engraving that he did not execute any for almost ten years.¹¹ In the meantime he had to content himself with the private revenge of including Cromek too in his vitriolic epigrams:

Cr--- loves artists as he loves his Meat¹²
He loves the Art but tis the art to Cheat

In view of what has been said about the Felpham and Cromek episodes, it is perhaps not surprising that both during Blake's lifetime and immediately after his death writers about art tended to be patronizing or dismissive: they would speak of him as amiable but eccentric; his work shows less of art than genius; he is the mystic who once saw angels in a tree; he is "a very eccentric being, at times almost a madman", "an amiable enthusiast, on the wrong side of the line of demarcation as it respected his sanity".¹³ "Mad or not Mad?" is one of the chapter-headings in Gilchrist's Victorian biography; even though Gilchrist's own verdict is in the negative and although he quotes in support of that verdict the testimony of many who had known Blake, he also endorses the view that "he was 'not mad, but perverse and wilful'".¹⁴ The forthright tone of this early Victorian comment, by Richard Henry Horne, is unusual for the period and impresses one with its unexpected freshness: "William Blake's estimate of himself as a man of genius (visions inclusive,) was a just one. If he saw no faults in his works, it has been a pleasant occupation for others to discover them for him."¹⁵

Only at one period in his life, in the eighteen-twenties, was Blake surrounded by a group of younger artists whom one might call disciples. The most important of these were Samuel Palmer, Edward Calvert and George Richmond. These men called themselves The Ancients, perhaps because they believed in a Golden Age of pastoral innocence.¹⁶ To Blake they would often refer as the Interpreter, in reference to the scene in Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress where Christian comes to the house of the Interpreter and says: "I am a man that am come from the City of Destruction, and am going to Mount Zion; and I was told . . . that if I called here, you would show me excellent things, such as would be a help in my journey."¹⁷ Another aspect of Blake's impact on these younger men is given by George Richmond, who wrote that when, as a boy of sixteen, he walked with Blake, it was "as if he were talking to the Prophet Isaiah".¹⁸

Blake, in these years, was engaged on his illustrations to Dante (no. 21) and to the Book of Job (nos. 14-20). Palmer writes about Blake in the act of composing these late works:

On Saturday, 9th October, 1824, Mr. Linnell called and went with me to Mr. Blake. We found him lame in bed, of a scalded foot (or leg). There, not inactive, though sixty-seven years old, but hard-working on a bed covered with books sat he up like one of the Antique patriarchs, or a dying Michael Angelo. Thus and there was he making in the leaves of a great book (folio) the sublimest designs from his (not superior) Dante. He said he began them with fear and trembling. I said 'O! I have enough of fear and trembling.' 'Then,' said he, 'you'll do.' . . . 19

But the works which the Ancients most admired and in which they found a personal starting-point as artists were the woodcuts which Blake had made in 1820 to illustrate a school edition of Virgil's Pastorals in the wretched eighteenth-century translation (or 'imitation') by Ambrose Philips (no. 13). The woodcuts are much closer to the spirit of Virgil than that of Ambrose Philips. They are not realistic pictures of shepherds but visions of a transfigured world, a world of pastoral innocence. The vision is of what Isaiah and Bunyan and Blake himself called Beulah, the married land, although it also includes its contrary, the fallen world represented by the blasted tree and the darkened moon (no. 13).²⁰

Again it is Palmer who wrote about them most eloquently:

. . . They are visions of little dells, and nooks, and corners of Paradise; models of the exquisitest pitch of intense poetry. I thought of their light and shade, and looking upon them I found no word to describe it. Intense depth, solemnity, and vivid brilliancy only coldly and partially describe them. There is in all such a mystic and dreamy glimmer as penetrates and kindles the inmost soul, and gives complete and unreserved delight, unlike the gaudy daylight of this world. They are like all that wonderful artist's works the drawing aside of the fleshly curtain, and the glimpse which all the most holy, studious saints and sages have enjoyed of that rest which remaineth to the people of God. . . .²¹

It is in the work of two of the Ancients that one sees the influence of

Blake's Virgil woodcuts most clearly, in some of Palmer's early watercolours and in Calvert's engravings such as The Sheep of His Pasture (no. 22B).

Calvert was six years older than Palmer, he served in the Navy and became a student at the Royal Academy in 1825. After joining the Ancients, he executed an astonishing group of works, mostly wood- or line-engravings, which combined an intensely passionate physicality with the visionary quality of Blake and of Palmer. A particularly fine example of his work is The Bride (no. 22A). In it the vine and the beehives reinforce the sense of fertility in the nude figures. The bride herself is voluptuous and yet statuesque, gigantic like Eve before the fall. The inscription "O God! Thy Bride seeketh Thee. A stray lamb is led to thy folds" refers to the lamb which the bride is leading back but also suggests that she herself is seeking a return to the divine beloved. Raymond Lister points out how the imagery recalls not only that of the Garden of Eden but also of the Song of Songs as well as Blake's lines in The Four Zoas:

I walk among his flocks & hear the bleating of his lambs
O that I could behold his face & follow his pure feet
I walk by the footsteps of his flocks come hither tender flocks
Can you converse with a pure Soul that seeketh for her maker
You answer not then am I set your mistress in this garden
Ill watch you & attend your footsteps you are not like the birds
That sing & fly in the bright air but you do lick my feet
And let me touch your wooly backs follow me as I sing
For in my bosom a new song arises to my Lord²²

Very fine too is the miniature wood-engraving The Chamber-Idyll.²³ In the room the lovers caress gently yet rapturously. The anticipation of their love-making is reinforced by the richly piled apples, the moonlit light seen through the lattice window on the left, the starry sky on the right, the animals at peace, the sheaves of corn. In later years Calvert abandoned his Christian faith and deleted the religious inscriptions from the blocks of his wood-engravings. Most of his rather disappointing later works are vaguely classical representations of nymphs, shepherds and fauns.²⁴ If they celebrate

paganism, they also appear to work hard at being unerotic, yet only succeed in reintroducing eroticism in a rather underhand way.

Samuel Palmer was able to transmute Blake's influence in an altogether original manner. In 1826 he settled in Shoreham, the village in Kent in its deep narrow valley which with its horse-chestnuts and apple-trees, its village church and oast-houses begins to appear in most of his drawings and water-colours. In the early 1890s Palmer's son Alfred Herbert was to write nostalgically (very much in the manner of Ruskin's Praeterita) about the Shoreham that once was (provided, that is, that one could ignore the rick-burnings and other signs of rural unrest with which the elder Palmer had no sympathy):

London is only twenty miles away; but years ago, a distance now disposed of by a few puffs of steam kept back that foul tide that has crept little by little over so much of Kent and Surrey. No unsavoury crowds defiled the sweet air with their ribaldry, and no shrieking engine startled the hares from their twilight supper, or the herons from their patient watch over the shallows. Everything connected with the little village in those happy times seemed wrapped about with a sentiment of cosy, quiet antiquity, full of associations that carried you far back into the pastoral life of merry England, years ago.²⁵

Yet Shoreham did not seem to have changed all that much by the 1940s when Geoffrey Grigson wrote his pioneering book on Palmer.²⁶ Having visited the village a few years ago, I would confirm that (although recent motorway extensions may be destroying what the railway had left intact).

In his Shoreham years Palmer produced drawings and watercolours of rare intensity, extending what he had learned from Blake, though he was never a slavish imitator. Indeed, as Grigson points out, "at nineteen, before he met Blake, Palmer was already a Christian, a visionary, and a mediaevalist".²⁷ The vision was not to last. Palmer acquired a house in London in 1832, he left Shoreham altogether in 1834, and in 1837 he married Hannah, the daughter of the painter John Linnell. Although it was Linnell who had introduced Palmer to Blake, he also tried to steer Palmer towards naturalism, towards

being successful, away from the sources of his vision. By the middle of the 1820s Palmer was already very much aware of the double pull to which he was subjected. Thus he wrote in 1825:

Nature is not at all the standard of art, but art is the standard of nature. The visions of the soul, being perfect, are the only true standard by which nature must be tried. The corporeal executive is no good thing to the painter, but a bane. In proportion as we enjoy and improve the imaginative art we shall love the material works of God more and more.²⁸

And again, in 1828, in a letter to George Richmond:

By God's help I will not sell away His gift of art for money; no, not for fame neither, which is far better. Mr. Linnell tells me that by making studies of the Shoreham scenery I could get a thousand a year directly. Tho' I am making studies for Mr. Linnell, I will, God help me, never be a naturalist by profession.²⁹

Yet as early as 1824, the year in which he met Blake, he had written to Linnell himself in a very different way--there is irony here, to be sure, but the irony seems uneasily defensive:

I have begun two studies for you . . . Have I not been a good boy? I may safely boast that I have not entertain'd a single imaginative thought these six weeks, while I am drawing from Nature vision seems foolishness to me--the arms of an old rotten tree trunk more curious than the arms of Buonaroti's Moses--Venus de Medicis finer than the 'Night' of Lorenzo's tomb and Jacob Ruysdaal a sweeter finisher than William Blake. However I dare say it is good to draw from the visible creation because it is a sort of practice and refreshes the mind tired with better things and prevents spoiling them which I have so often done and so bitterly lament.³⁰

For a short period a balance or perhaps it would be better to say a creative tension between the scrupulous fidelity to nature and the visionary intensity was maintained but much of the later work is either matter-of-factly naturalistic or romantic in an unauthentic way. Upon his marriage he went on a journey to Italy which was both honeymoon and painting-tour. Italy had, of course, been a source of inspiration to many English landscape artists: to Richard Wilson, to both Alexander and John Robert Cozens, and, most ob-

viously to Turner. Palmer made naturalistic studies in Northern Italy and in Rome which in their own terms are successful enough but which in earlier years he would have repudiated. When he moved further South, towards Naples, he found himself unable to cope with the brightness of the Mediterranean light and produced work which strikes one as merely garish.³¹ In his later years he would often return to the Italian material and try to reconcile the natural and the visionary. The Art Gallery of Ontario's Sunset (no. 31) is a striking example of his later manner. It is a powerful work but the special quality of the Shoreham years is gone.

Yet with the etchings of his later years some of the visionary quality returns. His first etching The Willow of 1850 is relatively conventional and uninspired³² but in the same year he etched The Skylark (no. 25), a work clearly related to Milton's "L'Allegro" (a poem which Blake too had illustrated). The shepherd figure and his dog are rather stiff but the light on the cornfield and the shepherd's longing look towards the bird high in the sky give the work an intensity which links it with the best achievements of the Shoreham years. Palmer's actual output as an etcher is small: thirteen completed etchings over a thirty year period, many of them extensively revised in successive states. Some of his finest etchings show landscapes of early morning or evening twilight, of moonlit or star-lit nights. The Early Ploughman, or The Morning Spread upon the Mountains (no. 28) is particularly impressive. The hills may be memories of Palmer's Italian journey but there is nothing tamely topographical about the etching which is a rendering of contrasts between light and shadows, between, on the one hand, the brightness of the sky and the gleams of light on the stream under the bridge, on the oxen and in the foreground and, on the other, the dark areas in the landscape which the rising sun has scarcely touched.

When Palmer died, he was working on a series of etchings to illustrate

the poems of Milton and the Eclogues of Virgil (in his own translation). Of the former series he completed only two, both illustrations of "Il Penseroso", The Bellman (No. 29) and The Lonely Tower (of which no. 30 is a facsimile). We are especially pleased to be able to show such a fine impression of The Bellman, which, with its delicate half-lights, does not reproduce easily. The Virgil was published posthumously in 1883. Only one etching Opening the Fold (no. 32) had been finished by the artist, but four others including the fine The Homeward Star³³ and The Cypress Grove (no. 33) were completed by Palmer's son Alfred Herbert. It seems fitting that the artist who was very much influenced at the outset of his career by Blake's Virgil illustrations should have ended his creative life by illustrating the same work, in a very different manner which is all his own.

There is a third member of the Ancients whose work we are showing. George Richmond was a few years younger than Palmer and his early work is very strongly influenced by Blake as is especially clear from the drawing The Shepherd which is in the Blake exhibition at the Art Gallery of Ontario.³⁴ Our nos. 34 and 35 (both from the Gallery's permanent collection) date from the same period and it should be noted that the second of these drawings was executed in Shoreham where Richmond was living in 1827. His latter career was a very different one since he became a fashionable and very successful portrait-painter. The quality of the later work is not in doubt and can be seen in the very striking double portrait "William Blake in Youth and Age" with which the Blake exhibition opens³⁵ and also by the first-rate portrait of Charlotte Brontë familiar from its appearance on the cover of the Penguin Jane Eyre. In his later years he turned his back more firmly and explicitly on the work of the Shoreham period than did Calvert or Palmer. Grigson wryly points out the contrast between the young man who at Blake's death-bed reverently closed the Interpreter's eyes and the successful portraitist

who recorded in his diary in 1868: "Total earned this year £3469 14s 6d, the largest income I have ever made." Yet, as Grigson notes, Richmond remained faithful to Palmer and he and his descendants treasured and carefully preserved Palmer's work, "as if Richmond had obscurely felt, after all, that Shoreham genius was more important than Royal Academy success, and had taken care to hand down a family tradition of the visionary excellence of his friend."³⁶

In 1863 Blake's reputation had been made secure by Alexander Gilchrist's Life of Blake, seen through the press after Gilchrist's death by his widow and by Dante Gabriel and William Michael Rossetti. It is hardly among the greatest of Victorian biographies, "suffering as it does from a surfeit of authors"³⁷, but it includes valuable reminiscences from Calvert and Linnell and others who had known Blake. The Gilchrist biography led to Swinburne's William Blake: A Critical Essay of 1868, while both works influenced the painter John Butler Yeats and his fellow-artists who called themselves "The Brotherhood". As a boy William Butler Yeats, the poet, found the Gilchrist biography in his father's library and became interested in its illustrations. Later Blake would become central to W.B. Yeats. He edited, with Edwin Ellis, Blake's poems in 1893 and wrote in the 1890s several articles and book-reviews on Blake, most notably an account of the Dante designs.³⁸ Blake was important for Yeats in that he represented a symbolist art which contrasted with all that Yeats most hated and feared the scientific world-view of Huxley and Tyndall, and the naturalism of Ibsen and of the French Impressionists.³⁹

Yeats' attitude towards naturalism was that of a minority but he was not alone. In 1888 The Century Guild Hobby Horse reproduced three of Blake's Virgil woodcuts as well as an attack by Selwyn Image on "Naturalism". Yeats' interests also began to include Palmer and Calvert. He read A.H. Palmer's Life of 1892 and would have known the reproductions of two of Calvert's woodcuts which the painter Charles Ricketts published in the periodical The

Pageant in 1897.⁴⁰ Indeed Yeats intended to write a monograph on Calvert but desisted, probably because in the last resort he considered Calvert "a fragmentary symbolist" as opposed to the more comprehensive and ordered world he found in Blake.⁴¹ Palmer, however, remained central to Yeats' imagination. He was especially impressed by The Lonely Tower and its evocation of intense solitary contemplation, a symbolic image which Yeats would himself act out when, after his marriage in 1917, he took up residence in the Norman tower and its adjacent cottage at Thoor Ballylee.⁴² Palmer's etching illustrates the following lines from Milton's "Il Penseroso":

Or let my lamp at midnight hour,
Be seen in some high lonely tower,
Where I may oft outwatch the Bear,
With thrice great Hermes, or unsphere
The spirit of Plato to unfold
What worlds, or what vast regions hold
The immortal mind that hath forsook
Her mansion in this fleshly nook:⁴³

In Yeats' poem "The Phases of the Moon" Yeats evokes not only the Palmer etching and the Milton passage which it illustrates but also his own house as well as the discipline of a soul and of the dedicated artist:

We are on the bridge; that shadow is the tower,
And the light proves that he is reading still.
He has found, after the manner of his kind,
Mere images; chosen this place to live in
Because, it may be, of the candle-light
From the far tower where Milton's Platonist
Sat late, or Shelley's visionary prince:
The lonely light that Samuel Palmer engraved,
An image of mysterious won by toil;
And now he seeks in book or manuscript
What he shall never find.⁴⁴

Palmer recurs, this time along with Calvert, in one of Yeats' last poems, "Under Ben Bulbin":

When that greater dream had gone
Calvert and Wilson, Blake and Claude,
Prepared a rest for the people of God,
Palmer's phrase, but after that
Confusion fell upon our thought.⁴⁵

"Palmer's phrase", "a rest for the people of God", comes from the description of Blake's Virgil woodcuts which has already been cited but, as Raymond Lister points out, Palmer himself was alluding to Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews (iv. 9).⁴⁶

Palmer's influence has continued in other ways. Graham Sutherland began his career as an etcher. Like Richmond, he was to move from graphic work to oil-painting, from landscape to portraits, but there the similarity ends. Sutherland was not much interested in painting his sitters in the way they wanted to appear as is clear from the lost Churchill portrait which Sir Winston disliked so much and which Lady Churchill destroyed. In the 1920s it was Palmer who was the dominant influence on Sutherland's work, in part through Sutherland's friendship with the older etcher F.L. Griggs. Palmer's influence is most obvious in Sutherland's magnificent Pecken Wood of 1926,⁴⁷ but some of it can be seen in his The Sluice-Gate of 1924 with which our exhibition closes (no. 36).

One of the aims of the great Blake exhibition at the Art Gallery of Ontario was to show Blake in his historical, artistic and intellectual context. In this exhibit which, in its obviously more modest way, seeks to complement the Blake we have had a similar aim. At its centre is a selection of Blake's own work: facsimiles of some of the illuminated books; commercial engravings of the early and middle years; selections from the Virgil, Job and Dante designs from the last years of his life. Round Blake we have grouped, on the one hand, older contemporaries who were important to Blake (Romney, Flaxman, Fuseil) and, on the other hand, disciples (Calvert, Palmer, Richmond) as well as; in the case of Sutherland, a disciple of a disciple. The works shown are of great artistic interest in their own right but they also show an important artistic tradition, with literary as well as visual aspects, which extends into our own age.

NOTES

1. The Poetry and Prose of William Blake, ed. David V. Erdman (New York, 1968), p. 498.
2. G.E. Bentley, Jr., Blake Records (Oxford, 1969), p. 27.
3. Quoted by Jean H. Hagstrum, "Romney and Blake: Gifts of Grace and Terror" in Blake in His Time, ed. Robert N. Essick and Donald Pearce (Bloomington and London, 1978), p. 201.
4. David Bindman, William Blake: His Art and Times (New Haven and Toronto, 1982), no. 24.
5. Hagstrum, p. 202.
6. Blake to Flaxman, 21 September 1800. The manuscript of this letter is in the AGO Blake exhibition; for the text see Bindman, no. 84.
7. Bentley, Blake Records, p. 72.
8. Alexander Gilchrist, The Life of William Blake, ed. Ruthven Todd (Everyman edition: London, 1982), p. 164.
9. Blake, Poetry and Prose, p. 497.
10. Blake, Poetry and Prose, p. 499.
11. Bentley, Blake Records, pp. 166ff.
12. Blake, Poetry and Prose, p. 500.
13. The last two quotations are from Bentley, Blake Records, pp. 625-26.
14. Gilchrist, p. 325.
15. British and Foreign Review, VI (1838), 626; listed in G.E. Bentley, Jr., Blake Books (Oxford, 1977), no. 1887. Horne's authorship was established by H.B. de Groot in "R.H. Horne, Mary Howitt and a Mid-Victorian Version of 'The Ecchoing Green'", Blake Studies, IV (1971), pp. 81-88.
16. According to Raymond Lister, the name is in reference to the claims of John Giles, another Ancient, that ancient man was superior to modern man; see Lister's Samuel Palmer: A Biography (London, 1974), p. 51. G.E. Bentley, Jr., says that the term, like that of the Interpreter, comes from Pilgrim's Progress ("Blake and the Antients: A Prophet with Honour Among the Sons of God", unpublished paper delivered at the 1983 UC Symposium).
17. John Bunyan, The Pilgrim's Progress, ed. Roger Sharrock (Penguin edition: Harmondsworth, 1965), p. 60.
18. Gilchrist, p. 299.
19. A.H. Palmer, The Life and Letters of Samuel Palmer (London, 1892), pp. 9-10.
20. Jean H. Hagstrum, William Blake: Poet and Painter (Chicago and London, 1964), p. 53.
21. Palmer, Life and Letters, pp. 15-16.
22. Raymond Lister, Edward Calvert (London, 1962), pp. 76-77; Blake, Poetry and Prose, p. 381.
23. Reproduced in Lister, Calvert, along with its original wood-block, Plates XXXVI, XXXVII, XL.
24. For examples of such later works see the plates in Lister, Calvert, and also in [Samuel Calvert], A Memoir of Edward Calvert Artist by His Third Son (London, 1893).
25. Palmer, Life and Letters, p. 39.
26. Geoffrey Grigson, Samuel Palmer: The Visionary Years (London, 1947), p. 50.
27. Grigson, p. 18. Grigson's book is still the best study of Palmer's earlier work and contains a fine series of reproductions. The finest

collection of Palmer's drawings and watercolours is in the Ashmolean at Oxford, but there are good examples in the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge and in the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa.

28. Palmer, Life and Letters, p. 16.
29. The Letters of Samuel Palmer, ed. Raymond Lister (Oxford, 1974), I, 36.
30. Palmer, Letters, I, 8.
31. For details of the Italian journey see Edward Malins, Samuel Palmer's Italian Honeymoon (London, 1968). Despite its novelettish title, this is a first-class biographical and critical study.
32. Reproduced in Raymond Lister, Samuel Palmer and His Etchings (London, 1969), plate 1.
33. Lister, Samuel Palmer and His Etchings, plate 14.
34. Bindman, William Blake: His Art and Times, no. 123.
35. Bindman, no. 1. This drawing has traditionally been ascribed to Frederick Tatham but Bindman's reasons for giving it to Richmond seem cogent.
36. Grigson, pp. 45-46.
37. Ruthven Todd in his introduction to Gilchrist, p. v.
38. For details see Bentley, Blake Books, no. 3047-3053.
39. D.J. Gordon and Ian Fletcher, "Symbolic Art and Visionary Landscape", in D.J. Gordon, W.B. Yeats: Images of a Poet (Manchester and New York, 1961), pp. 91-107.
40. Gordon and Fletcher, pp. 95, 106.
41. Gordon and Fletcher, p. 106; Grigson, p. 39.
42. Yeats' tower is reproduced in Joseph Hone, W.B. Yeats, 1865-1939, Second Edition (London, 1962), opposite p. 319.
43. John Milton, "Il Penseroso", ll. 85-92, in The Poems of John Milton, edited by John Carey and Alistair Fowler (London, 1968), p. 143.
44. W.B. Yeats, Collected Poems, Second Edition (London, 1955), p. 184; quoted in Lister, Samuel Palmer and his Etchings, p. 97. Cf. also T.R. Henn, The Lonely Tower, Second Edition (London, 1965).
45. Yeats, Collected Poems, p. 400; quoted by Lister, loc.cit.
46. Lister, loc.cit.
47. Reproduced in Lister, Samuel Palmer and his Etchings, plate 37; cf. also the etching by Paul Drury, reproduced in plate 38.

CATALOGUE

A. BLAKE'S OLDER CONTEMPORARIES

1. George Romney (1738-1802)

A Brooding Man

black chalk on paper

lent by the Art Gallery of Ontario (gift of Mr and Mrs Schuyler C. Snively, 1966)

George Romney's Brooding Man, powerfully delineated by a few vigorous lines of chalk drawing, demonstrates but one aspect of the artist's extraordinary range of invention.

All evidence suggests that this drawing was executed c.1773-1777. Between 1773-1775 Romney travelled extensively in Italy, pursuing a course of study from the antique and the Old Masters. He had occasion at this date to come into contact with Henry Fuseli (1741-1825) in Rome and to share with him a circle of artist friends counting Johan Sergel, John Henderson and William Cowper among them.

The figure in this drawing probably owes its inspiration to Michelangelo's Sistine Ceiling and Last Judgement. Pressly (no. 128) situates the brooding, melancholic figure in a group with numerous studies by Fuseli and Sergel. Both in physiognomy and bodily expression, the image is similar to several of Fuseli's self-portraits and sketches of youths, and to Sergel's The Thinker in the Nationalmuseum, Stockholm. It is also not unlike other sketches by Romney of approximately the same date, notably his Medea Contemplating the Murder of Her Children (Baltimore Museum of Art).

Romney's treatment of the subject recalls the style of Fuseli. The massive head and rather demonic expression are reminiscent of Fuseli's paintings in the Shakespeare Gallery and of his Lear, now in the Art Gallery of Ontario.

But perhaps of more interest is the striking resemblance between this drawing and Henry Fuseli's Self-Portrait, c.1777-1779 (National Portrait Gallery, London). Romney's sitter shares with the older artist the long, strong nose and deep-set, staring eyes as well as more general features of his countenance. (S.D.D.)

2. George Romney

John Howard Visiting a Lazaretto, c. 1790

pen, brush, black and grey wash, black chalk and pencil

lent by the Art Gallery of Ontario (gift of Professor T.A. Heinrich, 1980)

Towards the end of his career George Romney projected a series of historical compositions far removed in character from his portraits. This drawing refers to the activities of the great prison reformer John Howard, as described in his book Principal Lazarettos in Europe (1789). It is one

of a large series of studies most of which are now in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge and at the Yale Center for British Art.

The work belongs to a period of frenzied activity for Romney, who, at the time, was involved with Aderman Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery and William Hayley's Life of Milton. Hayley's literary taste, and his interest in contemporary social reform, impelled Romney to develop the theme of John Howard. Through Hayley Romney obtained further descriptions of Howard's surveys which, he wrote on January 5, 1793, "produce new ideas in my mind" (Jaffé, p: 67).

Set in the gloom of a dungeon, this scene shows Howard confronted by a group of lamenting inmates, one of whom, kneeling and bound from behind, appears to be pleading with him. The image is imbued with a sense of drama and foreboding common to other interpretations of the same theme (see Bindman, William Blake, no. 24 and Jaffé, nos. 94-100). (S.D.D.)

3. Flaxman, John (1755-1826)
Paternal Affection
 pen and ink with grey wash
 lent by the Art Gallery of Ontario

Positive identification of this drawing in relation to Flaxman's finished work is difficult. Though probably inspired by the artist's association with India through a series of commissions for funerary monuments executed upon his return to England from Italy in 1794, the image cannot be linked directly either to sculptures or book illustrations of the period. It therefore is usually grouped with a number of drawings of enigmatic subjects made late in the artist's life.

Professor G.E. Bentley Jr. (communication to the Art Gallery of Ontario) has suggested that the drawing may be related to a monument for an Indian. Perhaps it was intended to commemorate the death of a foreign dignitary, or even that of the small child resting in his arms. The image certainly bears no relation to Flaxman's finished portrait monument of Raja Sarfogi (Sarabhoji) of Tanjore. Executed in 1803-5, and originally intended for the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, Flaxman's sculpture depicts the Raja standing upright with his hands clasped before him in an attitude of reverence (see Irwin, fig. 250, p. 18). In contrast, the drawing represents a seated Indian calif holding an infant in his arms. Even more significantly, the Indian in this drawing wears a turban and contemporary robes, while Raja Sarfogi appears in particularized costume and headress which Flaxman copies, for the sake of authenticity, from an Indian miniature of his subject.

Nor does Paternal Affection conform iconographically with Flaxman's other sculptures for patrons overseas, whether for Indians or for English residents in India, such as the monuments for Sir William Jones (1796) and Reverend Christian Frederick Schwartz (1805). Nonetheless, in its simplicity of design and its rendering of modern sentiment, the

figures possess a monumental intimacy typical of Flaxman's most innovative designs. In its sensitive outlines with grey wash, the drawing is absolutely characteristic of Flaxman's best work. (S.D.D.)

For Flaxman, see also below, no. 11.

For Fuseli, see below, no. 8.

B. WILLIAM BLAKE: THE ILLUMINATED POEMS

4. The Blossom from Songs of Innocence, 1789
relief etching with watercolour
shown in facsimile (Blake Trust, 1954); original in Lessing J. Rosenwald Collection, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
Bentley, Blake Books, no. 139, copy B; Bindman, Graphic Works, no. 67.
lent by the Thomas Fisher Rare Books Library

The Songs of Innocence were written in the form of poems for children, specifically in that of eighteenth-century religious verse. At the same time they subvert the values of the models which they both imitate and parody. The eighteenth-century didactic poems for children tried to inculcate obedience, thrift, restraint; Blake stresses play, exuberance, spontaneity.

In the design for The Blossom a winged mother-figure sits on a (in this copy) green flower (which is also a flame) holding a baby. Winged children play round her. Two of them are kissing. Hagstrum comments: "the merry sparrow who seeks his narrow cradle with the swiftness of an arrow is an exquisite rendition of sexual experience, and the sobbing robin is an equally exquisite rendition of mother-love and child-sorrow. The blossom is, in the first stanza, wife, in the second, mother" (William Blake: Poet and Painter, pp. 82-3).

Although the plate was etched in 1789 and although the Songs of Innocence were first published in that year, it is impossible to determine when each individual copy was executed, especially when (as in this case) there is no watermark date. This copy is generally regarded as early, since on the whole Blake's early illuminated books are more delicate and subdued in their colouring than the later ones.

5. The Blossom from Songs of Innocence and of Experience, 1794
relief etching with watercolour
shown in facsimile (Orion Press, 1967); original in Lessing J. Rosenwald Collection, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
Bentley, Blake Books, no. 139, copy Z.
lent by H.B. de Groot

Blake added in 1794 the Songs of Experience to the Songs of Innocence. As far as is known, he never issued the Songs of Experience on their own, although the possibility that he did so cannot be excluded. Blake called Innocence and Experience the two contrary states of the human soul. Experience presents us with a harsh unnatural society in which the freedom of Innocence is restricted and its energies are driven underground.

This very brightly coloured copy, in which the flame-flower has become more flame than flower, is a late work. The watermark is given by Bentley as 182[5?] (Blake Books, p. 369).

6. Frontispiece and title-page from Europe: A Prophecy, 1793
relief etching, colour-printed, with watercolour
shown in facsimile (William Blake Trust, 1969); original of left-hand
plate in collection of Mrs. Landon K. Thorne (Bentley, Blake Books,
no. 33, copy G), of right-hand plate in that of Lord Cunliffe
(Blake Books, no. 33, copy B)
Bindman, Graphic Works, nos. 167-168.
lent by the Thomas Fisher Rare Books Library

Blake's America had dealt with the American Revolution, which Blake saw as a struggle between Orc and Urizen, between energy, desire, youth on the one hand and restraint, reason, authority on the other. Europe carries the Revolution to the European continent. Yet it is clear from Europe that Blake sees Orc and Urizen as different aspects of the same figure: sooner or later the rebellious adolescent will turn into the reactionary old man. The end of Europe shifts the emphasis from Orc to Los, from the political revolutionary to the blacksmith who is also artist and prophet.

As Erdman points out (Illuminated Blake, p. 156), the design of the frontispiece is based on Paradise Lost:

Then stayed the fervid wheels, and in his hand
He took the golden compasses, prepared
In God's eternal store, to circumscribe
This universe, and all created things:
One foot he centred, and the other turned
Round through the vast profundity obscure,
And said, Thus far extend, thus far thy bounds,
This be thy just circumference, O world. (VII, 224-231)

The figure depicted, however, is not the Creator but Blake's Urizen, who limits, restricts, sets bounds. There are six extant copies of a very similar design issued as a separate plate, known as the Ancient of Days (Bentley, Blake Books, p. 148; Bindman, Graphic Works, no. 655).

The serpent on the title-page is Urizen's contrary: "Embodying energy, desire, phallic power, the fiery tongue, he turns his back on the geometer, looks us directly into the eye, and points on up into the Prophecy we must study" (Erdman, Illuminated Blake, p. 157).

C. WILLIAM BLAKE: ILLUSTRATOR AND ENGRAVER OF THE WORK OF OTHERS

7. Mary Wollstonecraft, Illustrations from Original Stories from Real Life, 1791
 engraving
 Bentley, Blake Books, no. 514A (2); Easson and Essick, William Blake: Book Illustrator, III, plate 2B; Bindman, Graphic Works, no. 110.
 lent by the Thomas Fisher Rare Books Library

Blake was a friend of Fuseli and must through Fuseli have come to know the radical publisher Joseph Johnson, who in 1791 set up Blake's French Revolution in type but in the end failed to publish it, presumably for fear of political reprisals. Gilchrist (Life of Blake, pp. 79-80) asserts that through Johnson Blake knew other leading radicals such as Godwin, Tom Paine and Mary Wollstonecraft (now chiefly known as the author of A Vindication of the Rights of Women). The evidence for this, however, is slight and Bentley concludes that all we can say is "that Blake was at least on the periphery of the Johnson circle" (Blake Records, p. 41). Whatever the degree of personal acquaintance between Blake and Mary Wollstonecraft, they would have shared radical and revolutionary ideas. All the same, Blake can have found little to admire in the simplistic, moralizing and didactic Original Stories. Most of his designs are no more than competent and dutiful as is shown quite clearly by the two engravings at present on view at the Art Gallery of Ontario (Bindman, William Blake, nos. 58a and b). There is, however, real power and genuine pathos in the engraving exhibited here in which a father, on coming home, finds his children dead and only the dog there to greet him. The starkness anticipates the mood of the Songs of Experience, which Blake was to engrave three years later.

8. Erasmus Darwin, The Botanic Garden, [1791]
 engraving, after Henry Fuseli
 Bentley, Blake Books, no. 450 (1); Bindman, William Blake, no. 27
 lent by G.E. Bentley, Jr.

Blake engraved five of the ten plates in the first part of this work. "The subject is an allusion to the annual flooding of the Nile. The jackal-headed god Anubis stands astride the river; above his head is the dog-star, Sirius, to the left a sistrum, to the right the Pyramids. A comparison with Fuseli's drawing in the British Museum makes it clear that Blake could take some liberties with the design he worked from; in this case he has emphasized the Urizen-like rain-God (Jupiter Pluvius) in the background" (Bindman, William Blake, p. 86). Pyramids are often in Blake an image of reason and materialism. Compare, for instance, the illustrations to Tiriel.

9. J.G. Stedman, A Narrative of a five years' expedition, against the Revolted Negroes of Surinam, 1796
 engraving, after Stedman

Bentley, Blake Books, no. 499 (14)
lent by G.E. Bentley, Jr.

Stedman's book has 86 plates. All of them were probably designed by Stedman himself, but a number of different engravers were used. Thirteen are signed by Blake as engraver and both Keynes and Bentley were confident that two others, including the one shown here, were also engraved by Blake.

Stedman again and again, in both text and illustrations, emphasized the cruel and unnecessary suffering of the negro slaves in Surinam. Erdman has argued (Blake: Prophet against Empire, pp. 230ff) that Stedman's vision of slavery influenced Blake's own art profoundly, especially in the way political and sexual slavery becomes a central metaphor in Visions of the Daughters of Albion. Erdman also suggests that the figure of the negro being broken on the rack reappears in the posture of the supine Orc in the "Preludium" to America (reproduced in Erdman, Illuminated Blake, p. 139; Bindman, Graphic Works, no. 148). Both America and Visions of the Daughters of Albion were issued in 1793, three years before Stedman's book, but there is evidence that Blake had been working on the Stedman illustrations as early as 1791; see The Journal of John Gabriel Stedman, ed. Stanbury Thompson (London: The Mitre Press, 1962), p. 336.

10. Edward Young, The Complaint, and the Consolation; or, Night Thoughts,
[1797]

engraving

Bentley, Blake Books, no. 515 (24); Easson and Essick, William Blake: Book Illustrator, IV, pl. 24; Young, Night Thoughts, eds. Essick and La Belle, p. 43; Bindman, Graphic Works, no. 360 (24)
lent by G.E. Bentley, Jr.

On 24 June 1796 the artist Joseph Farington wrote in his diary that Fuseli had visited him and had told him that Blake had been making designs for an illustrated edition of Young's Night Thoughts for "Edwards the Book-seller . . . Blake asked 100 guineas for the whole. Edwards said He could not afford to give more than 20 guineas for which Blake agreed.-- Fuseli understands that Edwards proposes to select abt 200 from the whole and to have that number engraved as decoration for a new edition" (Bentley, Blake Records, p. 52). Blake executed 537 designs in pen and watercolour, all of which are now in the British Museum (there is a complete set of slides of these in the Thomas Fisher Rare Books Library). Only 43 were engraved, by Blake himself, and he received the merest pittance for several years' work.

Young's conventional pieties run counter to Blake's views at many points. As has often been pointed out, the designs form as much a critique as an illustration of Young's poem (see, in particular, the essays by Helmstadter listed in the Bibliography of the Essick and La Belle edition). In the engraving shown here a snake, curled in a figure of eight, is ready to snatch its tail with its mouth. Within the folds of the snake, but rising above it, is a female figure, Young's Narcissa, with outstretched hands

and with her feet on a crescent moon. In a prefatory passage in the 1797 edition the frontispiece to the third Night is described as follows:

A female figure, who appears from the crescent
beneath her feet to have surmounted the trials of
this world, is admitted to an eternity of glory:
eternity is represented by its usual emblem--a
serpent with its extremes united. [p. x]

It is not clear who wrote this. Keynes stated that Fuseli did (Blake Studies, p. 63) and the suggestion has been taken over, with a "perhaps", by Bentley (Blake Books, p. 638). I have found no evidence for this assertion. Given Blake's use of the serpent image elsewhere and given the fact that the female figure is reaching above and away from the serpent it is much more likely that, with the "serpent with its extremes united", Blake is representing the natural and the earth-bound in contrast with the eternal. Such an interpretation is strengthened through a comparison with two of Blake's other designs for the Night Thoughts, neither of them engraved. One is on the verso of the frontispiece shown here in its engraved version and is clearly a 'contrary' to the frontispiece itself. It is a female figure, closely resembling the Orc of the Prophetic Books is chained to the temporal and material world, the tail-eating snake, which has roots and has bare branches growing out of it (reproduced in de Groot, "Ouroboros", Plate VII). In the other design (de Groot, Plate VIII) Blake shows a male figure standing on top of a tail-biting snake, pointing upward.

The magnificent design for the engraving shown here can be seen in the Blake exhibition at the Art Gallery of Ontario (Bindman, William Blake, no. 62). For other designs, see the edition by John E. Grant a.o.

11. The Iliad of Homer Engraved from Compositions of John Flaxman, 1805 engraving
Bentley, Blake Books, no. 457A (3); Essick and La Belle, Flaxman's Illustrations to Homer
lent by the Thomas Fisher Rare Books Library

Flaxman was working on his illustrations of Homer, Aeschylus and Dante in Rome in 1792. He appears to have seen them as an evening activity after his work on sculpture during the day-time. He also saw the drawings less as ends in themselves than as "compositions upon which sculpture could be based" (Bindman, "Italian Drawings", p. 86). The Iliad designs were first published in 1793 with 34 plates engraved by Tommaso Piroli. The 1805 edition has five additional plates, three by Blake and two by James Parker. The engraving shown illustrates a passage in Book I of the Iliad and prints Pope's translation of the relevant lines:

Thus Thetis spoke but Jove in silence held
The sacred councils of his breast conceal'd.

Flaxman's drawings are economical, statuesque and severely neo-classical. Blake's art is Romantic, inspired by the Gothic, and sometimes tending towards the baroque. Yet Flaxman's linearity must have appealed to any engraver, especially to Blake in whose aesthetics line was always so much more important than colour, as is clear from his annotations to Reynolds' Discourses.

12. Robert Blair, The Grave, 1808
engraving, designed by Blake, engraved by Luigi Schiavonetti
Bentley, Blake Books, no. 457B (12); Bindman, Graphic Works, no. 476 (12)
lent by G.E. Bentley, Jr.

Blake executed one etching in the series himself, that for Death's Door. The publisher Robert Cromek apparently disliked this so much that he employed another engraver, Luigi Schiavonetti, to execute the remainder of the work. (The Blake exhibition at the Art Gallery of Ontario has both Blake's own etching and the Schiavonetti version for Death's Door; see Bindman, William Blake, nos. 64b and c. For more on the relationship between Blake and Cromek see above, "Introduction", p. 5 and, more fully, Bentley, Blake Records, pp. 166ff.) Schiavonetti's engraving style was very different from Blake's and in most cases the power of Blake's designs has been much reduced through the engraving process. Yet the engraving shown, The Reunion of the Soul & the Body, is still a very moving work. It meant much to the poet Christina Rossetti, who wrote in her "Reading Diary":

There is a design by William Blake symbolic of the Resurrection. In it I behold the decending soul and the arising body rushing together in an indissoluble embrace: and this design, among all I recollect to have seen, stands alone in expressing the rapture of that reunion. (Time Flies: A Reading Diary, p. 88)

She goes on to compare a passage from the fourteenth canto of Dante's Paradiso, "which describes a company of the blessed yearning for the Resurrection: not, as Dante conjectures, for their own perfection's sake merely, but likewise for the renewal's sake of beloved ties." The association was clearly a very personal one, for she gives the Dante passage in the translation of Charles Bagot Cayley, the man she had loved and who had died in 1883, two years before the publication of Time Flies.

For Samuel Palmer's comment, see below Addendum, p. 38.

D. WILLIAM BLAKE: THE LAST DECADE

13. Virgil, Pastorals, 1821
wood-engravings
Bentley, Blake Books, no. 504 (10-13); Bindman, Graphic Works, nos. 607-610;
Easson and Essick, William Blake: Book Illustrator, X, nos. 6-9.
lent by G.E. Bentley, Jr.

Thornton's edition of Virgil's Eclogues (or Pastorals), in the translation of Ambrose Philips, was a school-book first printed without illustrations in 1812. Separate woodcuts were published in 1814 and published together with the text in the second edition of 1819. For the third edition of 1821 other engravers, including Blake, were asked to provide additional work. Blake designed and executed twenty woodcuts, made six engravings on copper and may have provided a further design for another engraver. Thornton and his publishers did not like Blake's woodcuts and three of them were recut by another hand. Most of Blake's work would probably have been scrapped or altered out of recognition, had not a number of artists, including John Linnell and Sir Thomas Lawrence, told Thornton of their admiration for them--or so at any rate Gilchrist reports (Life of Blake, p. 279). Even so, Thornton (or his publishers) felt it necessary to provide an apologetic note:

The illustrations of this English Pastoral are by the famous BLAKE, the illustrator of Young's Night Thoughts, and Blair's Grave; who designed and engraved them himself. This is mentioned, as they display less of art than genius, and are much admired by some eminent painters (I, p. 13).

Of all Blake's works the Ancients, Calvert and Palmer especially, were most attracted by the Virgil designs. Palmer's famous description of them has already been quoted in the Introduction (above, p. 7). The four woodcuts exhibited here illustrate passages from the first Eclogue printed on the opposite page, the top two being taken from Thenot's speeches and the bottom two from those of Colinet. The first illustrates the mildews spoiling the rising corn, the blasting winds and the moon "blood-stain'd in foul eclipse"; the second a shepherd chasing a wolf; in the third the picture of the river illustrates Colinet's lament about leaving the river near which he grew up; the bottom one shows him as a traveller. Hagstrum relates the woodcuts to Renaissance traditions and calls them "powerful moral emblems in which the blasted wheat, the agitated shepherds, the dead trunk, the darkened moon are signs of a fallen world" (William Blake: Poet and Painter, p. 53). The woodcut at the bottom may contain an autobiographical reference to Blake's sojourn with William Hayley at Felpham (see Introduction, above, pp. 4-5), as it shows a mile-stone lettered "LXII miles to London" with Colinet walking towards London and away from the village in the distance.

The woodcuts were cut down for the 1821 edition. Moreover, the cheap paper on which the edition was printed does not do justice to the quality of the designs, as is made clear through a comparison with the proof plates printed in the 1937 edition by Keynes or with the recent British Museum printing by Iain Bain and David Chambers.

- 14-20. The Book of Job, 1825 [for 1826]
engravings
Bentley, Blake Books, no. 421 (2, 4, 12, 13, 14, 21, 22); Damon, Blake's

Job, nos. 1, 3, 11, 12, 13, 20, 21; Bindman, Complete Graphic Work, nos. 626, 628, 636, 637, 638, 645, 646; Lindberg, Blake's Illustrations to the Book of Job

lent by G.E. Bentley, Jr.

Throughout his life Blake was interested in the story of Job. In 1793 he made a print of Job (in the Blake exhibition at the Art Gallery of Ontario, Bindman, William Blake, no. 15; also in Bindman, Graphic Works, no. 6). In 1810 he executed a series of designs for his patron Thomas Butts (now in the J. Pierpont Morgan Library, New York; six of these are in the Blake exhibition, Bindman, William Blake, no. 115a). About ten years later John Linnell suggested that Blake publish the Job designs as he was in financial need. In 1821 the designs were borrowed from Butts. Blake and Linnell together completed a series of tracings which Blake then coloured (most of these are now in the Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Mass.). Blake then completed a third set for Linnell (now in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge; information from Bentley, Blake Books, p. 518). The engravings are dated 1825 but appear to have been published in 1826. There are two sets of proofs, Blake's working proofs, and the first 215 copies marked 'Proof'. It is from the second set that the very fine copies exhibited are taken.

14. (Plate 1) Illustrates Job 1:5. Job and his family are at their evening prayers. The sun is setting; ominously, the new moon has the old moon in her arms. Job is clearly a prosperous, pious and law-abiding man. Musical instruments hang unused in the trees. The sheep and the dog are asleep. Of the epigraphs "The Letter Killeth. The Spirit giveth Life" is especially revealing. Job has lived according to the letter of the law but he has shut himself up from the spirit of God.
15. (Plate 3) Illustrates Job 1:13. When Job hears about the dissipations of his sons, his anger has no bounds. "Satan, the Accuser, born in Job's own brain, destroys his sons and their women" (Damon, p. 16).
16. (Plate 11) Illustrates Job 7:14. Job's God points to the Tables of the Law, he is entwined in the serpent of materialism, his left leg ends in a cloven hoof. He is the Accuser, the Satan of Plate 3. In contrast to Job's apparently total defeat as depicted, the epigraph "For I know that my redeemer liveth" (Job 19:25) suggests the beginning of Job's spiritual awakening (Damon, p. 32).
17. (Plate 12) Illustrates Job 32:6. After Job's comforters have had their say and not brought comfort, the young Elihu speaks. He is angry with Job "for justifying himself instead of God, and even more [with] the friends for condemning Job without answering him" (Damon, p. 34). Elihu's gesture suggests Job 35:5, "Look unto the heavens, and see; and behold the clouds which are higher than thou", quoted by Blake in the bottom margin. In the sky, however, are not clouds

but stars which suggests another line from Job (33:15), "In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction", quoted by Blake in the upper margin. Damon (p. 34) points out Job's sleeping humanity in the lower margin.

18. (Plate 13) Illustrates Job 38:1. "At last, in the Whirlwind of the mystical ecstasy, the true God appears. He is Jesus, the Divine Imagination, and the Forgiveness of Sins: the only God whom Blake recognized" (Damon, p. 36). Damon also notes that Job's comforters cannot see God because they are blown flat by the wind.
19. (Plate 20) Illustrates Job 42:15. The central panel behind Job is a version of the thirteenth plate showing the Lord speaking out of the whirlwind. The panels on either side represent the sufferings through which Job has lived. Job's gesture with outstretched arms repeats that of the Lord in the central panel above and behind him. His daughters nestle close to him, in a way which by contrast emphasizes the frigid formality of the family scene in the first plate.
20. (Plate 21) Illustrates Job 42:12. The last Chapter of Job emphasizes the increase in Job's worldly prosperity but what is central in Blake's design is that the musical instruments which in the first plate hung on the trees are now being played. The ecstasy of music-making has replaced dutiful piety. The sheep have woken up and the dog is relaxed but watchful.
21. Dante Alighieri, Inferno, Plate I engraving
Bentley, Blake Books, no. 448D; Bindman, Graphic Works, no. 647
lent by G.E. Bentley, Jr.

Blake's designs for Dante's Divine Comedy were commissioned by John Linnell as the Job engravings had been. We know from Samuel Palmer's recollections (above, p. 7) that Blake was working on them in October 1824. He made 102 watercolours, nine of which are in the Blake exhibition at the Art Gallery of Ontario (Bindman, William Blake, no. 116). Seven of the designs were engraved and were first published by Linnell in 1838, eleven years after Blake's death. The engraving shown here is one of 25 sets pulled in 1968 by Harry Hoehn.

There were many aspects of Dante which Blake disapproved of. As in the case of Young's Night Thoughts, his designs form a critique as well as a set of illustrations (the critical implications of this are explored in Roe, Dante's Illustrations to The Divine Comedy). The engraving exhibited here shows the whirlwind of lovers in the Circle of the Lustful described by Dante in Canto V of the Inferno. Paolo and Francesca are represented while making love in the sun-shaped disc above and are also in the whirlwind to the right. Dante swoons, struck with compassion for the lovers:

While thus one spirit spake,
 The other wail'd so sorely, that heart-struck
 I, through compassion fainting, seem'd not far
 From death, and like a corpse fell to the ground.
 (Inferno, V, 135-38; quoted from the Cary trans-
 lation which Blake used)

Virgil stands to the right, partly bending over the supine Dante. "Dante rests on a thorny promontory which probably stands for Experience; the whirlwind enclosing Paolo and Francesca, by emanating from him, suggests that they represent the divisions of his own soul" (Bindman, William Blake, p. 180).

E. THE ANCIENTS: CALVERT, PALMER, RICHMOND

22. Edward Calvert (1799-1883) engravings

The Bride, 1828 (Lister 8C III/III and The Sheep of His Pasture, 1828 (Lister 9B II/II) in [Samuel Calvert], A Memoir of Edward Calvert (London, 1893)

lent by the Art Gallery of Ontario (E.P. Taylor Reference Library); gift of Mrs. Seymour Lyon

Two fine examples of Calvert's early work. The title The Sheep of His Pasture is taken from the Old Testament, see Psalms 74:1 and 79:13, Jer. 23:1. The design clearly recalls Blake's Virgil designs, especially the depiction of the stream in no. 13. The Bride carries the inscription "O God! Thy Bride seeketh Thee. A stray lamb is led to Thy folds." For further discussion of the designs, see above, p. 8.

23. Samuel Palmer (1805-1881) Sketchbook, shown in facsimile (Trianon Press, 1962) lent by the Thomas Fisher Rare Books Library

According to A.H. Palmer, Samuel Palmer used more than twenty notebooks. This is the only one to survive. It belonged to George Richmond and passed to A.H. Palmer after Richmond's death in 1896. The others were probably burned in A.H. Palmer's great bonfires preceding his emigration to Canada.

Palmer's sketchbook, which he used in 1824, also served as a journal. The following passage gives a good sense of his artistic and 'visionary' concerns:

Note, that when you go to Dulwich it is not enough on coming home to make recollections in which shall be united the scattered parts about those sweet fields

into a sentimental and Dulwich looking whole. No. But considering Dulwich as the gate into the world of vision one must try behind the hills to bring up a mystic glimmer like that which lights our dreams. And these same hills, (hard task) should give us promise that the country beyond them is Paradise-- (pp. 81-82)

The two pages shown give a good sense of both the naturalistic and pastoral aspects of Palmer's work. With the second page Butlin compares "such finished work as 'A Hilly Scene', c.1826 (Tate Gallery), 'Coming from Evening Church', 1830 (Tate Gallery) and 'The Magic Apple Tree', c.1830 (Fitzwilliam Museum)" (Sketchbook, vol. 2, p. 31).

24. Samuel Palmer
wood-engraving after Palmer's design
Dickens, Pictures from Italy, 1846
lent by the Thomas Fisher Rare Books Library

Dickens commissioned four wood-engravings from Palmer for Pictures from Italy. They caused many worries and technical problems. Dickens wrote a gracious letter about them (quoted by Lister, Palmer and his Etchings, p. 121) but his praise for Palmer's work, probably based on Italian scenes executed earlier, is rather undercut by the fact that he had not apparently seen the designs which he was being so gracious about. The wood-engraving shown is related to Palmer's watercolour of the cypresses at the Villa d'Este, reproduced in Lister, Palmer and his Etchings, Plate 21.

25. Samuel Palmer
The Skylark
etching (Lister 2.VII/VIII)
lent by Francis & Leslie Broun

Designed in 1850. The state shown, the seventh, was published as Plate 17 in Etchings of the Art Union of London by the Etching Club (1857).

The theme of the skylark fascinated Palmer and he made a sepia drawing with that title in 1831-32 (no longer extant; reproduced in Grigson, Samuel Palmer: The Visionary Years, plate 53) as well as a later panel picture, The Rising of the Lark (Grigson, p. 109; Lister, Samuel Palmer and his Etchings, p. 76). The Cleveland Museum of Art has a drawing dated 1850, a sketch for the etching (Samuel Palmer: A Vision Recaptured, no. 2c). An impression of The Skylark was exhibited in 1927 with the inscription, in Palmer's hand, "To hear the lark begin his flight" (Samuel Palmer: A Vision Recaptured, p. 48). The inscription shows clearly that Palmer's inspiration was Milton's "L'Allegro":

To hear the lark begin his flight,
And singing startle the dull night,
From his watchtower in the skies,
Till the dappled dawn doth rise; (ll. 41-44)

The artist F.G. Stephens wrote about the sky in the etching: "Light, searching through and through the cloud, has found nothing solid enough

to reflect it, and therefore penetrates the body and is lost. The prodigious expanse of the atmosphere is thus represented in a way which is worthy of Turner himself" (quoted in Lister, Samuel Palmer and his Etchings, p. 76).

26. Samuel Palmer
The Sleeping Shepherd; Early Morning
 etching (Lister 6. IV/IV)
 lent by Francis & Leslie Broun

Designed in 1857. The state shown, the fourth, was published as Plate 5 in Etchings for the Art Union of London by the Etching Club (1857).

Related to the early painting, tempera and oil on wood, The Sleeping Shepherd c.1833-1834 (Grigson, no. 140, plate 64; reproduced in colour as the frontispiece to Lister, Samuel Palmer and his Etchings). Grigson suggests (p. 13, 108) that both derive from the Graeco-Roman figure of Endymion the Shepherd Boy Asleep on Mt. Latmos and quotes two letters from Palmer, thirty years apart, on the sculpture. There is also an early pen and sepia wash-drawing on the subject in the Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester (Samuel Palmer: A Vision Recaptured, no. 6d). The National Gallery in Washington possesses a hand-coloured proof of the first state of the etching (reproduced, in colour, in Samuel Palmer: A Vision Recaptured, plate 13).

As often with Palmer, it is the quality of the light which makes the etching remarkable. Especially striking is the contrast between the secluded nook in the foreground and the open sky, seen through the frame of the trellis, at the back; between the sleeping shepherd and the ploughman working on the hilly slope.

27. Samuel Palmer
The Rising Moon; or An English Pastoral
 etching (Lister 7. VII/IX)
 lent by Francis & Leslie Broun

Designed in 1857. The state shown, the seventh, was published as plate 10 in Etchings for the Art Union of London by the Etching Club (1857).

The first of Palmer's larger etchings. Lister (Samuel Palmer and his Etchings, p. 81) suggests that it combines elements of the Shoreham period, in particular those to be found in the drawing Cornfield by Moonlight (Lister, plate 34, and, in colour, Samuel Palmer: A Vision Recaptured, plate 3), with the influences of his visits to Devon and to Italy.

28. Samuel Palmer
The Early Ploughman; or The Morning Spread Upon the Mountains
 etching (Lister 9. IX/IX)
 lent by Francis & Leslie Broun

Begun before 1861. In 1926 three distinguished etchers, Sir Frank Short, Martin Hardie and F.L. Griggs, made a number of impressions of The Early Ploughman (and also of four other Palmer etchings: The Willow, Christmas or Folding the Last Sheep, The Bellman, and Opening the Fold or Early Morning). Each carries the initials F.S., M.H., F.L.G. as well as a small engraved triangle below the lower left-hand corner of the border line. Although pulled many years after Palmer's death, this is a particularly fine copy, a real testimony to the craftsmanship of the artists involved. After the pulls were made, the plate was cancelled by a vertical line through its centre. The Early Ploughman appears to be the most frequently seen of Palmer's etchings. Besides the copy shown, I have located four in different private collections in Ontario. The Art Gallery of Ontario also owns two copies.

Related to the sepia drawing, Rising with the Lark or Ploughing with Oxen, c.1835-36, now in the British Museum, and to two of the Milton designs, that for Lycidas and for the Eastern Gate (Samuel Palmer: A Vision Recaptured, XVI, XVII). Lister believes that "the figure of the woman in the etching was probably inspired by an antique gem carving" (Samuel Palmer: A Vision Recaptured, p. 53).

For further comment, see above, p. 11.

29. Samuel Palmer
The Bellman
 etching (Lister 11. V/VII)
 lent by the Art Gallery of Ontario

Completed in 1879. The Bellman and The Lonely Tower are Palmer's largest etchings. The Bellman was rebitten thirteen times, the quality of each impression gaining in richness and intensity until Palmer was satisfied he had achieved a precise contrast between light and dark in each area. The state shown, the fifth, can be distinguished by the remarque, a small branch, in the lower right-hand margin. Sixty proofs of this state, including the print shown here, were issued in 1879 by The Fine Art Society.

The etching illustrates Milton's "Il Penseroso":

Far from all resort of mirth
 Save the cricket on the hearth,
 Or the bellman's drowsy charm,
 To bless the doors from nightly harm: (ll. 81-84)

In 1863 Palmer had exhibited in the Water-Colour Society's Winter Exhibition Twilight: the Chapel by the Bridge (present whereabouts not known).

This was bought by L.R. Valpy, who proceeded to make what A.H. Palmer termed "the very singular request to be shown anything my father had in hand which specially affected his 'inner sympathies'" (Life and Letters, p. 149). In reply Palmer suggested "Il Penseroso". At this stage he appears to have had two designs in mind, an indoor one illustrating the lines:

Where glowing embers through the room
Teach light to counterfeit a gloom

and an outdoor one for the bellman. He continued:

I carried the Minor Poems in my pocket for twenty years, and once went into the country expressly for retirement, while attempting a set of designs for L'Allegro and Il Penseroso, not one of which I have painted (!!!), though I have often made and sold other subjects from Milton. But I have often dreamed the day-dream of a small-sized set of subjects (not however monotonous in their shape yet still a set; perhaps a dozen or so), half from the one and half from the other poem. For I never artistically know "such a sacred and homefelt delight" as when endeavouring in all humility, to realize after a sort the imagery of Milton.

(June 1864; Life and Letters, p. 255)

In September 1864 Palmer suggested four designs for each of the two poems: sunrise contrasted with a grey morning; the upland as against the inland sentiment; two wide expanses--the one "melting into fairland" and the other "blank water"; the amber sky as against a mysterious evening followed by darkness (Life and Letters, p. 258). In the end only three scenes were taken from "L'Allegro" and the night scenes became The Bellman and The Lonely Tower, both from "Il Penseroso".

A series of letters to Valpy, preserved in a fragmentary form and of uncertain date, lists seven completed designs, all of them shown at the Exhibitions of the Fine Art Society and also the unfinished Bellman:

I do not falter on 'The Bellman's Drowsy Charm'. Here we enter seclusion without desolateness; where light enough remains to show the village sheltered in its wooded nest, and that the ground heaves well and is rich enough in pasture. Increasing gloom sometimes enforces the sentiment of exuberance by giving more play to the imagination.

(Letters, ed. Lister, II, 699)

About the etched version Palmer wrote in 1879 to P.G. Hamerton:

I am very glad that you like my Bellman. . . . It is a breaking out of village-fever long after contact-- a dream of that genuine village where I mused away some of my best years, designing what nobody would care for, and contracting, among good books, a fastidious and unpopular taste.

(Life and Letters, pp. 377-78)

As this letter makes clear, The Bellman shows the village of Shoreham, although it is surrounded by an imaginary landscape. The work represents Palmer's attempt to recapture the Kentish village where he lived at a time when he was close to Blake and to Calvert.

The Cecil Higgins Gallery, Bedford possesses a watercolour drawing of The Bellman. Lister thinks this may be an early working drawing coloured later (Samuel Palmer: A Vision Recaptured, p. 71; the drawing is reproduced, colour, Plate 18). There are two other versions. One is a sepia and chalk drawing, which Lister dates c.1864 and considers to be "the final sketch for the Chiaroscuro effects of the etching". The second is a large watercolour and gouache of 1881, made for Valpy, which Palmer still considered unfinished at the time of his death (op.cit., p. 71; the three works listed are XXI (c), (d) and (e)). The Bellman and The Lonely Tower are the only two etchings of the Milton series that Palmer was able to complete. In 1889 A.H. Palmer brought out The Shorter Poems of John Milton with twelve photographic reproductions of Palmer's drawings (there is a copy in the Thomas Fisher Rare Books Library). It is a pity that A.H. Palmer chose not to use the etched versions of The Bellman and The Lonely Tower. The results are not improved by the fact that the printer managed to reverse The Lonely Tower! (HBdG and S.D.D.)

30. Samuel Palmer
The Lonely Tower
 etching, shown in facsimile (Lister 12. IV/VI)
 lent by H.B. de Groot

Completed in 1879. Samuel Palmer: A Vision Recaptured lists three related works: a wash-drawing possibly of 1864 in the Cincinnati Art Museum, marked on reverse by A.H. Palmer 'The First design for the "Lonely Tower" Milton Drawing . . .' (XXIIId); the watercolour and gouache made in 1868 for Valpy, now at the Yale Center for British Art (XXIIe); a watercolour of uncertain date (? after 1864), now at the Huntington, which Lister considers "probably the final design for the etching" (XXIIIf).

The etching illustrates a passage from Milton's "Il Penseroso":

Or let my lamp at midnight hour,
 Be seen in some high lonely tower,
 Where I may oft outwatch the Bear,
 With thrice great Hermes, or unsphere

The spirit of Plato to unfold
 What worlds, or what vast regions hold
 The immortal mind that hath forsook
 Her mansion in this fleshly nook: (ll. 85-92)

Graham Reynolds notes that "Palmer links 'The Lonely Tower' firmly with Milton's verses by faithfully including in his sky the constellation of Ursa Major or the Bear" (Samuel Palmer: A Vision Recaptured, p. 42).

For its relation to The Bellman and other Milton designs, see above no. 29.
 For the significance of The Lonely Tower to Yeats, see above, p. 14.

31. Samuel Palmer

Sunset

water-colour, body-colour and gum arabic
 lent by the Art Gallery of Ontario

Lister (letter to the Art Gallery of Ontario) suggests that this beautiful, remarkably well-preserved watercolour was executed c.1879. One of Palmer's late pictures, it is contemporary with the set of drawings from Milton that Leonard R. Valpy, the solicitor, commissioned in 1865 and which remained unfinished at Palmer's death.

The atmosphere of Sunset is of a late summer or autumn evening illuminated by the twilight. A hazy sky catches the last glimmers of sunlight; forms and objects emerge by degrees from the Turner-esque shadows.

Under the evening sky, a herd of cattle is driven homeward through a wooded landscape. Rustic figures ford a winding river in the foreground; on the far left, a flock of sheep disappears over a shallow hill. Above, the crescent moon, smaller than the moon of the Shoreham period, seems to hang over the landscape. Here Palmer has interpreted all his favourite subjects in elegiac terms.

The composition revolves around the castle ruins in the centre of the picture, and the transitions between substance and shadow, solid and void, reality and ethereal vision. In this work Palmer truly achieves the "mystery, and infinite going-in-i-tiveness" (Life and Letters, p. 113) he tried to reach in his middle period.

The jewel-like finish of the picture stems from Palmer's technique. By utilizing gouache in combination with a wash of Chinese white, Palmer endowed his colours with a pastel-like quality. The luminous shadows owe their intensity to saturation with gum arabic. (S.D.D.)

32. Samuel Palmer

Opening the Fold or Early Morning

etching (Lister 13. VII/X) in An English Version of the Eclogues of Virgil, 1883

lent by the Thomas Fisher Rare Books Library

Opening the Fold is the only Virgil etching which Palmer lived to complete. Palmer had been working on his translation of Virgil's Pastorals in the 1860s and had received some help from Edward Calvert. On 26 January 1872 he wrote to P.G. Hamerton enquiring about the possibility of having them published. He continued:

It seems desirable that those who do not read them in the original should have some version from which the pastoral essence has not quite evaporated. . . .

If Blake were alive and I could afford it, I would ask him to make a head-piece to each bucolic.

How exquisitely he would have done it we know, seeing that perhaps the most intense gems of bucolic sentiment in the whole range of art are his little wood-cut illustrations to Phillips' Pastorals in Dr. Thornton's book. They seem to me utterly unique. But enough and more than enough of myself and my dreamings. (Life and Letters, p. 323; compare above, p. 7 and no. 13)

Opening the Fold Illustrates a passage in the eighth Eclogue. It reads, in Palmer's own translation:

Scarce with her rosy fingers had the dawn
From glimmering heaven the veil of night withdrawn,
And folded flocks were loose to browse anew
O'er mountain thyme or trefoil wet with dew,
When leaning sad an live stem beside,
These, his last numbers, hapless Damon plied.

Lister, in Samuel Palmer: A Vision Recaptured, lists two other versions, both c.1880, a sepia design for the etching (XIb) and a watercolour (XIc).

33. Samuel Palmer (completed by A.H. Palmer)
The Cypress Grove
etching (Lister 15. I/IV) in An English Version of the Eclogues of Virgil,
1883
lent by H.B. de Groot

Although this etching was left incomplete at Samuel Palmer's death, the etching is signed which seems to indicate that it was brought near to completion and that the work done by A.H. Palmer is slight.

The etching illustrates a passage in the fifth Eclogue. It reads, in Palmer's translation:

Untimely lost, and by a cruel death,
The Nymphs their Daphnis mourn'd with faltering breath.

Samuel Palmer: A Vision Recaptured lists a design for the etching (VIIb).

34. George Richmond (1809-1896)

A Lover Lamenting over the Grave of his Mistress

pencil, pen and ink

lent by the Art Gallery of Ontario (gift in memory of Andres A. Kinghorn, 1979)

Despite Laurence Binyon's opinion that, "In draughtmanship and manipulation of his medium [Richmond] was decidedly superior to Samuel Palmer..." (Binyon, p. 19), little has been written on George Richmond's early drawings. Yet his visionary work is not without significance. It attests to Richmond's development as an artist while providing valuable documentation on the ideas and interests pervading in his circle at the time.

The sheet of studies in this exhibition is inscribed on the reverse side "April 16, 1827. Shoreham, Kent." It corresponds, therefore, to the period between 1824 and 1830 when, before leaving to study in Paris, Richmond attended the Royal Academy under Fuseli, became a follower of William Blake, and was a close friend of Samuel Palmer.

Several influences can be discerned in this work. The point of departure for Richmond's subject matter overall, and perhaps for his Lover Lamenting... in particular, must have been provided by literature. Like the rest of the group to which he belonged, Richmond was widely read, being familiar not only with the classics and the Bible, but also with the work of Keats, Shakespeare, Milton and Spenser.

At the same time, Richmond was familiar with the iconography of Romanticism. The febrile outlines of his sketches of felines capture the same unmistakable spirit that inspired Stubbs, Ward and Landseer in England and was transmitted to France via Delacroix.

The source for the figure on the right is probably more specific. Here Richmond appears to have borrowed liberally from Blake's vocabulary of bodily gesture. As David Bindman has noted, after the 1790s Blake expressed the highest form of ecstasy "by the arms extended fully with the palms open, accompanied by a strong upward movement of the whole body" (William Blake, p. 36). The figure appears, for example, in Jerusalem, plate 76. However, in attempting to fix this image upon his memory, Richmond has endowed the figure with his own sense of rhythmic energy. (S.D.D.)

35. George Richmond

Satan on his Voyage to Paradise, 1828

black chalk, pen and black ink and grey wash

lent by Art Gallery of Ontario (gift of Norcen Energy Resources Ltd., 1980)

The subject of this carefully finished drawing is taken from Milton's Paradise Lost:

...and Satan there
 Coasting the wall of heaven on this side night
 In the dun air sublime, and ready now
 To stoop with wearied wings, and willing feet,
 On the bare outside of this world, that seemed
 Firm land imbosomed without firmament,
 Uncertain which, in Ocean or in Air.

(III, 11. 70-76)

Richmond's interpretation of the theme is an intensely personal vision. Though the composition is dominated by a heavily muscled and apparently sexless figure similar to that of his line engraving The Fatal Bellman, 1827 (Private Collection, England; reproduced Lister, Richmond Plate II, illumination 4), here Richmond has abandoned the minutely naturalistic landscape which betrays his interest in Durer's engravings in favour of a richly atmospheric design.

It is, nevertheless, a synthesis of various influences. The figure brings to mind Blake's colour prints Satan exulting over Eve and Elohim creating Adam (1795) as well as the line engraving from the Dante series (1827) titled The Baffled Devils Fighting. (S.D.D.)

F. AN AFTERCOMER: GRAHAM SUTHERLAND

36. Graham Sutherland (1903-1980)
The Sluice-Gate, 1924 (Tassi no. 10)
 etching
 lent by Orest Rudzik

In the nineteen-twenties Sutherland was a young etcher, strongly influenced by the work of Palmer in part through his friendship with the older etcher F.L.Griggs (see above, no. 28). Sutherland turned to oil-painting soon after 1930 and his last etching is dated 1932.

ADDENDUM to no. 12.

Palmer wrote in August 1864 to L.R. Valpy: "You do me the honour to ask my opinion of Blake's Blair's Grave. It seems to me to contain some of his finest designs, and worth possessing were it only for that lovely thought, the beautiful soul leaving the body; with a look out upon hill slope and sky--nothing, yet everything." (Life and Letters, p. 256)

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